

Submission
No 151

**INQUIRY INTO EDUCATION AMENDMENT (ETHICS
CLASSES REPEAL) BILL 2011**

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 16/02/2012

Partially Confidential



15 February 2012

Hon Marie Ficarra MLC
Chair of Parliamentary Inquiry into Ethics Course
C/- GPSC 2
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney. 2000.

SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO ETHICS COURSE

Dear Ms Ficarra,

The Ethics Course does not teach ethics in the sense of right and wrong but is rather the discussion of ethical issues from a philosophical perspective, e.g. how to justify thoughts and actions. It does not teach ethics as understood by most parents. Parents opting for the Ethics Course would anticipate that morals would be taught.

Real ethics is already taught in the Primary School syllabus. Beyond that ethics is also covered in S R E through the Bible which contains the Ten Commandments, the "Golden Rule" and teaches the fear of God.

Time has been given by governments to the churches since 1880 (and reaffirmed in 1990 and 2008) in recognition of the valuable role of religion in upholding moral and ethical standards in society.

Furthermore some knowledge of Christianity and the Bible is essential to a proper understanding of our culture, art, history and faith, particularly in relation to our Western civilisation. While these ethics classes continue students are being robbed of this valuable background knowledge.

The St James Ethics Centre originally said that the Course would only be offered to "non-attenders at S R E". However it is being offered to all students, including S R E students, and in the time allocated by law to S R E classes. Thus the Ethics Course has been placed in direct competition with S R E. There have been reports of deliberate attacks on the teaching of Scripture classes. One Sydney primary school announced that there would be no more Scripture classes, only Ethics classes. Thus the Ethics Course would cause division, friction, distrust and disharmony in schools.

In view of these facts I earnestly request that the Inquiry recommends support for the Rev Hon Fred Nile's *Education Amendment (Ethics Classes Repeal) Bill, 2011*, or at least ensure that they are not held at the same time as S R E classes.

Thanking you,
Yours sincerely,